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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 001773

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STATE WHA FOR ALBERT KRAAIMOORE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/21/2018
TAGS: [XK](#) [UAID](#) [ETRD](#) [EUN](#)
SUBJECT: EU CONCERNED ABOUT SITUATION IN NICARAGUA BUT MAY
NOT CALL FOR RECOUNT

REF: A. A) STATE 122262
[1](#)B. B) PARIS 2135

Classified By: Pol M-C Christopher Davis for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) PolOff delivered REF A demarche to the French EU Presidency on November 21, encouraging the EU to press for a recount of the disputed November 9 Nicaraguan municipal elections. French Latin America counselor Valerie Liang-Champrenault voiced the French EU Presidency's concern about the situation in Nicaragua generally and said the EU would take up the issue in its COLAT working group on December 3, basing its discussion on a report compiled by EU Ambassadors in Managua. Not entirely consistent with what the French MFA told Embassy Paris (REF B), Liang-Champrenault questioned the value in calling for a recount of votes now, when many ballots were simply thrown away. She also asked what the international community's next steps would be if the GON simply refused to conduct a transparent recount.

[1](#)2. (C) On the other hand, Liang-Champrenault said that the EU would consider all the tools at its disposal to voice its concern and help change the behavior of the Government of Nicaragua. This could include a declaration about the Nicaraguan political situation or limits on development cooperation. She also said the GON's conduct could have consequences for the EU-Central America association agreement currently under negotiation and/or for Nicaragua's status under the EU's Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). (Comment: The EU is scheduled to decide on December 15 whether Nicaragua, among other countries, will retain its eligibility for tariff preferences under the so-called GSP Plus. End Comment.) Liang-Champrenault admitted not knowing what would be necessary to impose each of these penalties, but said the COLAT working group would consider such issues.

SILVERBERG

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